



End of summer brings threats of PED and PRRS virus spread; swine producers urged to take biosecurity measures

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Media Contacts:

Raechelle Cline

608.224.5005 raechelle.cline@wi.gov

Jim Dick, Communications Director

608-224-5020 jim.dick@wi.gov

MADISON –The hot, dry conditions of summer have given way to the wet, cold days of winter and that can contribute to the spread of viral diseases like Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) and Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS), according to Dr. Paul McGraw, state veterinarian at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Anyone who raises swine in Wisconsin should brush up on their biosecurity practices to minimize the potentially devastating effects of these viruses.

“Summer heat gave us a bit of a break from virus worries, but now that the weather is changing we have to change our practices to keep these diseases at bay,” McGraw says.

Methods of transmission are similar for both diseases and can be minimized by using proper biosecurity methods, including washing trucks and trailers between loads, washing boots and clothing, and establishing a line of separation between clean and dirty areas. Free informational materials are available from the National Pork Board at www.pork.org.

“The National Pork Board has produced an abundance of information about the many precautions swine farmers should be taking to minimize their losses by keeping the virus off their farm,” McGraw says.

The PED virus causes diarrhea, vomiting and severe dehydration in hogs, especially young pigs. The PRRS virus causes reproductive failure in breeding stock and respiratory illness in young pigs. Subclinical infections are also common. Industry analysts estimate more than six million swine have died from PED since the disease was first discovered in the United States in April 2013. Likewise, PRRS is estimated to have cost the U.S. hog industry \$664 million annually in productivity losses.

For more information about animal diseases, visit datcp.wi.gov. You can also connect with us on Twitter at twitter.com/widatcp or Facebook at facebook.com/widatcp.

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